

programmed to transmit to suppliers a matrix showing desired products to be used in developing the mathematical models.

[c20] A computer programmed in accordance with Claim 19 and further programmed to transmit to the suppliers a spreadsheet of desired products into which at least one of the suppliers can enter pricing information.

[c21] A computer programmed in accordance with Claim 17 and further programmed to transmit to the suppliers a bid sheet.

[c22] Apparatus comprising:
means for receiving product listing and pricing information from multiple suppliers;
means for developing an initial regression equation for each supplier based on the received product listing and price information;
means for combining the initial regression equations for each of the suppliers into a combined regression equation for a product line; and
means for receiving purchase contract bids from suppliers.

[c23] Apparatus in accordance with Claim 22 further comprising means for transmitting to the suppliers the combined regression equation and the products to enable bids from the suppliers.

[c24] Apparatus in accordance with Claim 22 further comprising:
means for providing suppliers a matrix illustrating desired products to be used in developing mathematical models; and
means for providing a spreadsheet of desired products into which a supplier can enter pricing information.

[illegible][illegible][illegible]

Figures

Figure 1: A line graph showing the relationship between the number of figures and the number of pages. The x-axis represents the number of figures (0 to 10), and the y-axis represents the number of pages (0 to 25). The graph shows a linear increase in the number of pages as the number of figures increases, starting from 0 pages for 0 figures and reaching 25 pages for 10 figures.